and the G-8 countries to the Prime Minister's unilateral declaration on the Independence Day (August 15, 1998) of the unilateral moratorium on further nuclear tests and the offer of negotiations on 'No first Use' of nuclear weapons towards the goal of Global disarmament; and

(b) what further steps have been taken and are contemplated by Government towards the said goal?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL): (a) Prime Minister's Independence Day speech received media coverage in Pakistan and China. There was however no official response to Prime Minister's Independence Day speech in these or the G-8 countries.

(b) At the Durban Summit of Non-aligned countries, India proposed and the Movement accepted that an international conference be convened in 1999 to arrive at an agreement on a time bound programme to abolish all nuclear weapons. At the UN General Assembly, Prime Minister reiterated this call. India has also proposed a new intiative at the UNGA aimed at reducing the risk of accidental or unauthorised use of nuclear weapons. India's commitment to disarmament remains undiluted and India would continue to work for global and non-discriminatory nuclear disarmament.

US Remarks on means of Tackling Militancy by India

563. SHRI SANJAY NIRUPAM: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attentions has been drawn to the remarks made by U.S. Under Secretary of State to the effect that India should restrain from adopting pursuit course to tackle the problem of militancy from across the border;

(b) if so, the reaction of the Government in the matter;

(c) whether Government will take up this issue with U.S. Government for its adopting double standards to tackle terrorism by it and advising others in a different way; and

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL): (a) US Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs, during a briefing on August 26, 1998 reportedly said "we of course believe that all terrorism should cease". In the context of cross-border terrorism, he is reported as having said: "We understand there are very large military forces poised on each side, forces which could be used in event of attack, which might be misunderstood, or in the event circumstances get out of hand", and that "there heve been talks and we hope there will be continue to be talks to deal with the problems across the line of control (LOC)".

(b) and (c) Government has been consistently drawing the attention of the international community, through bilateral channels and in multilateral fora, to the issue of Pakistan's active and continued sponsorship of terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir and other parts of India. This has in particular been taken up on a number of occasions with the US authorities. The US government has conveyed that they understand India's concerns and that the US takes a serious view of such terrorist activities. The US has also designeated the Harkat-Ul-Ansar as a terrorist organisation under US laws.

(d) Does not arise.

ढाका से अजमेर के लिए बस सेवा का प्रस्ताव

564. श्री ओंकार सिंह लखावत: क्या प्रधान मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) क्या बंगलादेश सरकार ने ढाका से अजमेर तक बस चलाने का प्रस्ताव भारत सरकार को भेजा है, यदि हां, तो इस संबंध में हुई प्रगति का ब्यौरा क्या है; और

(ख) क्या भारत सरकार इस प्रस्ताव को स्वीकृत करने का विचार रखती है?

कृषि मंत्रालय में राज्य मंत्री (श्री सोमपाल): (क) और (ख) सितंबर, 1997 में भारत और बंगलादेश के बीच एक मोटर वाहन करार पर वार्ता के दौरान चर्चा में शामिल मसलों में कलकत्ता और ढाका को जोड़ने के लिए बस सेवा आरंभ किये जाने का प्रस्ताव भी था। बंगलादेश की सरकार ने प्रस्तावित मार्ग को अमजेर तक बढ़ाये जाने का अनुरोध किया था परन्तु उसके प्रश्चात वह ढाका और कलकत्ता के बीच एक बस मार्ग के प्रस्ताव पर वापस आ गयी है। भारत की सरकार ने बंगलादेश को मोटर वाहन करार का एक प्रारूप सौंपा है जो इस मार्ग और अन्य मार्गों के निर्माण को सुगम बनायेगा।

Blacklisting of Indian Organisations by USA

565. DR. MOHAN BABU: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that 200 Indian Organisations have been blacklisted by the United States administration;

(b) if so, to what extent the US decision is likely to effect our economy; and

(c) whether any protest has been lodged by Government with the US administration and if so, with what results?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL): (a) the US Department of Commerce published on 13th November 1998 a list of Indian entities that will be subject to export restrictions. The list includes 40 Indian Government agencies, public sector units and private companies. together with their subsidiaries the total number of such entities is 208. The US Govt. notification states that US Commerce Department licences will be required for export by US companies to the listed entities.

(b) This step is likely to have an adverse impact on mutually beneficially business interactions, particularly those related to dual use high technology items, both through delays and denials of export licences. Exports of US companies to India will also be affected. India has been subject to similar restrictions over several years. India has been able to overcome such impediments to its defence and security related programmes.

(c) GOI issued a statement on November 14, 1998 indicating that this was a highly unfortunate development and further that these restrictions interfere with the free flow of trade, technology & finance and would have an adverse impact on mutually beneficial business interaction. This decision reflects the continuation of a coercive approach that is entirely misplaced and counter productive. Such steps are unhelpful for meaningful discusions towards an improvement in bilateral relations which is desired by both countries.

Subsidy to Haj Pilgrims

566. SHRI RAJNATH SINGH 'SURYA': Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government propose to reduce subsidy being given to Haj pilgrims;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) why has the constitution of Haj Committee been delayed by nearly two years; and

(d) by when will it be reconstituted?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL): (a) and (b) The Government has been providing a subsidy to the Ministry of Civil Aviation in respect of Haj air charter fares to make up the difference between the fare paid by each pilgrim, i.e., Rs. 12,000/-, and the fare per pilgrim actually finalised with the air charter company. The Haj air charter fares are under negotiations at present. The extent of subsidy to be provided for Haj-99 will be decided after the air charter agreement has been finalised.